

Governor Chris Gregoire



# Listening to You

Spokane ♦ Vancouver ♦ Pasco ♦ Puyallup ♦ Bellevue ♦ Seattle ♦ Everett

This summer Governor Gregoire and her senior staff are visiting several communities across the state, engaging citizens in a meaningful dialogue about state government's priorities, performance and accountability. She is reaching out beyond the lobbyists and special interests who traditionally have had the most access to state government decision makers. As she puts it,

**"We can't set the state's priorities alone in Olympia. I am reaching out to hear directly from the citizens, so they can help me set priorities and identify ways to measure whether state government is working better or not."**

The citizen engagement process is designed in three tiers to engage citizens in a meaningful dialogue, and to gather information from multiple sources.

1. **Citizen Workshops:** Fifty citizens are selected at random to represent a cross-section of each community. These citizens meet with members of the governor's staff for a three-hour workshop to discuss, design, and prioritize performance measures to track progress in critical services, such as health care, the economy, transportation and education.
2. **Community Leader events:** Community leaders representing a broad spectrum of interests and organizations meet with the governor's senior staff to discuss the priorities developed in the citizen workshops, delving further into the most important issues in that community.
3. **Town Halls:** In an open community forum, Governor Gregoire will ask citizens directly what results they think their state government ought to be accountable for delivering.

Governor Gregoire will use the citizens' ideas to inform state budget development in the fall. She also conducts bi-weekly performance review sessions with agency directors, holding them personally accountable for delivering real results and ensuring that citizens get a good return on their tax dollars.

A final report on the summer's tour will be completed by August 31, 2006.

## Vancouver Citizen Workshop: Summary Report

Wednesday, July 5, 2006 at Clark College

### Who was at the Vancouver Citizens Workshop?

- 47 Citizens, all registered voters who had voted at least once in past 4 elections
- Gender: 47% male, 53% female
- Where from: 46% City of Vancouver, 22% other cities, 33% unincorporated Clark County
- Age Group: 40% were 51-64, 27% were 36-50, 20% were 18-35, and 13% were 65 or older
- Household: 24% Single, no children; 26% Couple, no children; 15% Single, children at home; 35% Couple, children at home
- Employment: 20% private sector; 28% public sector, 52% not employed or retired

**Here's what the citizens in Vancouver said they cared most about, in rank order of priority:**

1. Education
2. Economy
3. Health
4. Safety
5. Vulnerable children and adults
6. Natural Resources
7. Transportation
8. Culture and Recreation

**Overall Comments:**

- Compared to a recent statewide survey, this group was more positive about how state government is working (Better 33%; Same 43%; Worse 24%)
- They want more media coverage for Washington news – “I feel more like an Oregonian”
- “This information would be useful when voting – especially on initiatives”
- “The real question is: are we getting the value for the money that is currently spent”
- They want to receive a report on the results from these workshops (from all the cities), and performance reports on how government is doing on the issues they care most about
- “We want to know not just the numbers, but the reason behind them”

**What is not working very well in state government today:**

- Education
- After school funding
- Public transportation
- Foster care
- Childcare funding
- Funding for the arts
- Health care
- Highway systems/traffic
- Mental health

**What is working well in state government today:**

- Education (Chinook elementary)
- Alternative transportation
- Special education
- Capital improvements
- Environmental issues
- Direct legislation (initiatives)
- Road construction is getting done
- Economy
- Laws against sexual predators
- Consumer protection
- Trade

Citizens at the workshop discussed the six topics below in greater depth, including some ideas for how to measure progress. The table below captures shows the priorities they care most about, along with some suggested ways to measure our progress in each of those areas.

Citizens care most about . . .	We could measure and report our progress by tracking . . .
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Graduation rates – from high school and college</li><li>• Percentage of students completing postsecondary certificates or degrees</li><li>• Gaps in student achievement between income and ethnic groups</li></ul>
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Percent of state labor force employed</li><li>• Rate of business growth across all areas of the state</li><li>• Per Capita Income</li><li>• Rate of business survival</li></ul>
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rate of health insurance coverage</li><li>• Infant mortality</li><li>• Percentage of people who abuse drugs, alcohol and tobacco</li><li>• Rate of obesity</li></ul>
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Documented readiness to respond to emergencies and natural disasters</li><li>• Reason behind traffic/injury rates (e.g uninsured drivers,DUI)</li></ul>

Citizens care most about . . .	We could measure and report our progress by tracking . . .
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demographics of the prison population</li> <li>• Recidivism rate on juveniles and adults</li> </ul>
Vulnerable Populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of children abused, neglected or exploited</li> <li>• Percentage of individuals and families living above the poverty level</li> <li>• Percentage of homelessness</li> <li>• Number of applicants denied for social services</li> </ul>
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel times in major corridors</li> <li>• Percentage of roads, bridges, etc. at or above satisfactory conditions</li> <li>• Percentage of transportation projects completed on time and on budget</li> <li>• Percent of households and businesses using alternative energy sources</li> <li>• Percent of population with connectivity to the Internet</li> </ul>

For more information about the Governor's Listening to You tour, visit  
[www.governor.wa.gov](http://www.governor.wa.gov)